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RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0120
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 0233
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RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 9636
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 0319
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0601
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0383
RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 0266
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA 0211
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT 0065
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 0231
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0337
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 3038
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 1250
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 0314
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 0867
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SUBJECT: EMBASSY DHAKA UPDATED INFORMATION FOR EIGHTH ANNUAL
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) REPORT

REF: STATE 02731, DHAKA 00290

¶1. This cable provides updated information provided by the Government of Bangladesh regarding its efforts against trafficking in persons (TIP) in the April 2007 to March 2008 reporting period. Embassy point of contact is Kapil Gupta, Political/Economic Officer, telephone: 880-2-885-5500 x 2206, IVG post-code: 583, fax number: 880-2-882-3744, e-mail: guptak@state.gov.

UPDATED INFORMATION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

¶2. With respect to law enforcement of Bangladesh's formal anti-TIP legislation, The Repression of Women and Children Prevention Act of 2000(amended in 2003), note the following corrected statistics for the reporting period:

Investigations = 123 cases [Increase by 16 from REFTEL B]
Arrests = 106 persons [Increase by 25 from REFTEL B]
Prosecutions = 101 cases [Increase by 7 from REFTEL B]
Under the purview of Bangladesh's judiciary:
Convictions = 20 persons (18 life, one ten year, and one 14 year sentence) [Increase by 5 from REFTEL B]

¶3. The Government of Bangladesh has provided post with additional information on law enforcement actions by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and the Rapid Action Battalion. All of these cases/complaints involve employment agents and/or travel agencies facing criminal charges for activities directly related to labor

trafficking. These criminal cases were filed under the Penal Code of Bangladesh, under applicable sections relating to fraud, criminal breach of trust, forgery, using forged documents and abetment, and cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property. [Note, these arrests and cases were not filed under The Repression of Women and Children Prevention Act of 2000(amended in 2003).] These are offenses that are not defined explicitly as trafficking, but for which the facts constitute a trafficking offense.

Law enforcement by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (under ZIA airport police station jurisdiction): 44 cases, against 48 individuals, including more than 30 recruiting and travel agents (and company owners) from the period of April 2007 to April 6, 2008. Currently 17 of these cases are under trial, final reports have been submitted of five cases, and 19 cases are under investigation. (Information on 3 cases was not available.)

Law enforcement by the Rapid Action Battalion: From April 2007 a total of 28 persons have been arrested for fraud, cheating, and using forged documents. This includes a total of 17 cases filed against labor recruitment or travel agencies. In this reporting period the RAB has received a total of 141 complaints against travel and recruiting agencies.

This new law-enforcement information represents an additional 76 persons arrested in 2007 for labor-trafficking related criminal offenses, and 61 cases initiated. This number does not include the arrests of high-profile individuals and government ministers on corruption charges, several of whom were suspected of involvement in labor trafficking activities, or who otherwise materially benefited from corruption around labor trafficking activities.

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UPDATED INFORMATION ON DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

14. The Government of Bangladesh has expanded bilateral diplomatic efforts to secure the rights of Bangladeshi workers in labor-receiving countries through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) regarding expatriate workers. The MOUs establish legal, regulatory and procedural mechanisms to facilitate licit international labor flows. Simultaneously, the MOUs seek to establish mechanisms for ensuring the rights of expatriate laborers, eliminating labor recruiting malpractices, and providing means for abused workers to obtain assistance. The first such MOU was signed between Bangladesh and Malaysia in 2006.

During the 2007 reporting period Bangladesh concluded three additional Expatriate Worker MOUs and began discussions on a fourth: UAE (May 2007), Korea (June 2007), Qatar (January 2008), and Oman (discussions underway; not yet signed.) Once concluded, the MOUs are issued as office orders by the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment to the applicable regulatory authority, the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).
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